

CLAIMS

1. A visual communication system comprising:
 - a camera for capturing images;
 - an electronic display for displaying said images captured by said camera;
 - a communication interface for communicating said captured images; and
 - a rugged casing protecting said electronic display, said camera, and said communication interface.

2. The visual communication system of claim 1 further comprising:
 - an illumination source for use with said camera.

3. The visual communication system of claim 1 wherein said communication interface includes:
 - a transmitter for facilitating wireless communication.

4. The visual communication system of claim 1 wherein said communication interface supports multimedia communication.

5. The visual communication system of claim 1 wherein said camera is moveable independent from said electronic display and said communication interface.

6. The visual communication system of claim 1 wherein said camera is miniaturized.

7. The visual communication system of claim 1 further comprising:
a microphone for facilitating verbal communication from a user of said system; and

a speaker for playing remote audio signals received by said communication interface.

8. The visual communication system of claim 1 wherein said communication interface includes:

a signal processor for communicating images captured by said camera.

9. A method for remotely monitoring services comprising the steps of:

establishing a network connection between a service provider and a customer;

visually capturing images of services provided by said service provider;

communicating said images to said customer over said network connection; and

reinforcing equipment used in said establishing, visually capturing, and communicating steps.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of:

displaying said captured images to said service provider.

11. The method of claim 9 wherein said communicating step further comprises the steps of:

processing said images; and

wirelessly transmitting said processed images to said customer.

12. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of:

establishing a voice communication link between said service provider and said customer.

13. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of:
illuminating said captured images.

14. The method of claim 9 wherein said captured images comprise
multimedia data.

15. A remote monitoring system comprising:
means for capturing visual images;
means connected to said system for displaying said captured visual
images;
means for communicating said captured visual images; and
means for ruggedly encasing said system.

16. The system of claim 15 further comprising:

means for illuminating said visual images for capturing.

17. The system of claim 15 wherein said means for communicating
includes:

means for wirelessly transmitting said captured visual images.

18. The system of claim 15 further comprising:

means for processing said captured visual images.